REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Status of the Application

Claims 1-12 were pending in this application. Of the above claims, claims 5 and 7-12 are withdrawn by the Examiner pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a non-elected species.

Claims 1-2 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Kropp (U.S. Patent No. 3,574,349).

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kropp (U.S. Patent No. 3,574,349) in view of Koblentz (U.S. Patent No. 6,123,625).

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kropp (U.S. Patent No. 3,574,349) in view of Bernstein (U.S. Patent No. 4,936,582).

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-2 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kropp. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and respectfully request reconsideration.

The Office Action states that Kropp discloses a grip with the front side of the grip 32 being substantially flat and the back side of the grip having a rounded shape. (Office Action, page 3). While Fig. 4 does show a flat surface 32 and a rounded surface 18, it is also clear from Figures 1-4 that the rounded surface 18 is at the front of the grip near the ball 35, and the flat surface 32 is at the back of the grip against the player's swinging forearm. Kropp also explicitly teaches that the hand grip has "a flat back surface," instead of a flat front surface as in the present invention. (Col. 4, lines 54-55; Col. 2, lines 3-4). Thus, Kropp fails to disclose a club comprising, *inter alia*, a grip with "a front side being substantially flat and the back side having one of a rounded or triangular shape," as recited in claim 1.

Applicants also submit that Kropp does not render the above limitation obvious. Kropp discloses a golf putter that is fundamentally different from that of the present application. In particular, Kropp teaches a "pendulum-type" of putting that requires the whole body to face the ball, with the arm swing of putting resembling the arm swing of bowling. (Col. 1, lines 23-25). As a result, the back side of the grip that contacts the player's swinging forearm is flat "to

facilitate the prevention of unwanted axial twisting of shaft 10." (Col. 3, lines 31-35). Thus, Kropp teaches away from a hand grip with "the back side having one of a rounded or triangular shape," as recited in claim 1.

Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit that Kropp does not disclose "a grip having a recess for receiving a shaft to thereby couple a grip to a shaft." The Office Action refers to Fig. 4 as disclosing the above limitation. However, Fig. 4 of Kropp only shows a cross section of the golf club in Fig. 1, at line 4-4. (Col. 3, lines 63-64). There is no illustration in any of the figures of a recess inside the grip to couple the grip to the shaft. Kropp only teaches that the shaft 10 is formed of a lower shank 17 and an upper grip 18. (Col. 2, lines 71-72). There is no teaching whatsoever in Kropp of a club comprising, *inter alia*, "a grip having a recess for receiving a shaft to thereby couple a grip to a shaft," as recited in claim 2.

Moreover, Kropp does not render this above limitation obvious. The recess of the grip according to an embodiment of the invention is useful for fitting over a standard putter shaft with its conventional rounded grip taken off. (*Application* page 6, lines 21-26). However, the golf putter taught by Kropp utilizes a "novel construction designed to implement a novel concept." (Col. 1, lines 4-6). Not only does the player's body face the ball during swinging, but the club is designed with a specific angulation. (Fig. 1; Col. 3, lines 9-18). The golf putter taught by Kropp is very different from standard golf putters, and accordingly there is no motivation to couple the grip of the club in Kropp to other golf putters designed to play a conventional game of golf. Thus, there is no motivation to modify Kropp to arrive at "a grip having a recess for receiving a shaft to thereby couple a grip to a shaft," as recited in claim 2.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 2 are allowable. Claims 3-4 and 6 depend from claim 1, and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as for claim 1.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kropp in view of Koblentz. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kropp in view of Bernstein. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections and respectfully

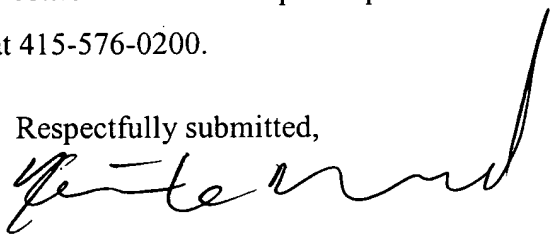
request reconsideration. As discussed above, Kropp does not teach or suggest all the limitations of claim 1, and the secondary references do not cure the deficiencies of Kropp. Thus, since claims 3-4 depend from independent claim 1, they are allowable as depending from an allowable base claim. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections to these claims be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,



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